



Baldrick to Monaco

Five star line-up for Celebrity Lunches in 2006

The actor made famous by the maddeningly dim-witted sidekick to Rowan Atkinson's *Blackadder* heads a fascinating line-up of guest speakers for the 2006 Celebrity Lunch programme at the Café de Paris.

Tony Robinson made his name in the eighties as Baldrick, but has long since moved on to become one of Britain's foremost faces of popular history with his *Time Team* TV series. In many ways he epitomises what this luncheon event in Monaco seeks to provide - intelligent entertainment in a convivial environment where business people come to network.

Began in September 2003, the four-event-a-year lunch is organised by Kevin Marsh of Azur Productions who works with the sponsors of the series to select the speakers.

Programme for 2006

For 2006, Robinson (on **September 29**) is joined by Alastair Campbell, the controversial ex-director of communications and strategy for Tony Blair's government (**June 10**), and another colourful ex-politician, David Mellor (**December 1**). The season kicks off on **March 10** with John McBride, former Ireland and British Lions captain.

'Humour is a key criteria,' says Kevin. 'The common theme is that they have to be well known, interesting characters and offer insights



Tony Robinson who played Baldrick in the *Blackadder* series is coming to Monaco

and anecdotes into their life and career - we want the stories that you don't read in the newspapers.'

The founding sponsors of this luncheon are Merrill Lynch, Moore Stephens and Lawrence Graham, all of whom were seeking a regular event where they could entertain clients. Brookshire and Company, and Club 328 joined last year and all five have committed to 2006.

'I compile a shortlist of speakers within an agreed budget and we finalise the programme together,' explains Kevin whose expertise is in business-to-business marketing through a sister company, Marketing Matters.

Since its inception with football hero Jack Charlton OBE in September 2003, the event has always sold out as

numbers are limited to 130. It is always on a Friday so if people want to continue in a bar before making it home for the weekend, they can. A big attraction is that guests have plenty of opportunity to talk to the speaker after the event.

It all kicks off at 12pm with aperitifs, a three course lunch with wine and coffee, followed by the speech.

Projects in the pipeline

The format has proved so successful that Azur Productions is in the middle of organising a series in French, with the support of the CDE (*Chambre de Développement Économique*), and a 'lifestyle' lunch programmed for the ladies - lifestyle gurus, personal trainers, financial and legal advice, and so on. 'The focus will be on being informative but with a light touch and of course humour,' says Kevin. The company is partnering with Outward Bound for this luncheon (HSH Prince Albert II is patron) and all profits will go to the charity.

In 2003/2004 Kevin brought over a string of British stand-up comedians to the Côte d'Azur but plans to upgrade the format to more of an 'evening with...' concept. He was also responsible for the recent *Reduced Shakespeare Company* tour and plans more theatre productions in the future.

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Dual sculpt expo in h



Artemar by Koba

THE Fairmont M hotel is the venue for an exhibition by two artists that is taking place from December 20 to 23. Koba Clauman's work features her mosaic pictures on the smooth stone of the olive tree, and every impression from another era. She is joined by Miguel exhibiting his latest works, clay that borrow from the past that represent eternal themes in stone and metal. The exhibition is open every day from 1pm to 9pm. www.ko-ba.fr